



PRESS RELEASE- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 29, 2011

Contact: Evelina Villa (562) 256-1364

TRAGIC ANIMAL CRUELTY CASE DEMONSTRATES DANGERS OF TRANSPORTING PETS IN PICKUP TRUCK BEDS

Marcia Mayeda
Director

Administrative Office
5898 Cherry Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90805
(562) 728-4882
Fax (562) 422-3408
<http://animalcare.lacounty.gov>



*Long Beach, CA...*A 46-year-old Lancaster woman plead no contest to Felony Animal Cruelty charges in Lancaster Superior Court following a disturbing case of animal neglect that resulted in her dog being dragged behind her pickup truck for more than 2 miles. She was sentenced Monday in Lancaster Superior Court. The incident occurred on July 28, 2011 at about 9:45am in the city of Lancaster.

Off-duty Animal Control Officer Derek Ames, a 3-year veteran of the County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control was driving on 45th Street West near Avenue I when he spotted a purple Dodge pickup truck in front of him with a tan Cocker Spaniel inside the bed of the truck. Ames saw the dog jump and noticed it had a rope tied to its neck as it was being dragged along the asphalt at more than 50 mph. Horrified, he attempted to catch up to the truck, honking his horn and flashing his lights in an effort to get the driver's attention. The truck finally pulled over and Ames told the female driver that he had called for help and instructed her not to move the vehicle. Ames reported the small dog, a 3 year-old female Cocker Spaniel named "Marley" appeared to be in shock clearly suffering from severe injuries to its paws, legs and belly. Ames reported the driver became visibly nervous, placed the dog back into the bed of the pickup truck and drove away. Ames followed the driver at a safe distance, periodically updating his location to his supervisor and the Lancaster Sheriff's Department. The driver finally stopped at Ave I and Challenger Way where she was met by animal control officers and deputies from the Lancaster station. The female driver was taken into custody and the dog was transported by an animal control officer to High Desert Animal Care Hospital in Palmdale. "The dog's injuries were so severe, the emergency hospital humanely euthanized her shortly after we presented her," said Marcia Mayeda, Director for the County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control. "The responding officers said they had not seen a more agonizing animal cruelty and neglect case in recent memory," Mayeda said.

The suspect, 46 year-old Cecillia Bojorquez of Lancaster, was sentenced on Monday to 3 years formal probation, 2 days (time served) in county jail, 45 days of community service, animal cruelty classes and Bojorquez was ordered to pay fines and court costs totaling \$300.00.

"This is such a tragic case, one that was completely avoidable had Marley's owner properly secured her or allowed her to ride safely inside of the vehicle," Mayeda stated. "We appreciate the cooperation and coordination by both the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the District Attorney's Office in this case."



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There are six Los Angeles County Animal Care Centers. The locations are: Downey, Baldwin Park, Carson, Castaic, Lancaster and Agoura Hills, in addition to the Antelope Valley Adoption Center, located in Lancaster.